A LOOKING-GLASSE OF HVMANE FRAILTY:

SET BEFORE US IN A

SERMON

PREACHED AT THE

FUNERALS

OF

Mris. *ANNE CALQVIT*,

Late Wife of

Mr. *NICHOLAS CALQVIT*,

Draper,

Who died on the 7. day of *April* 1659. and was interr'd the 19. of the same month, At the Parish Church of *Alhallows* the less in *Thames Street*.

By *NATH. HARDY*, Minister of St. *Dionys. Backchurch*.

Psal. 144. 4.

Man is like to vanity, his dayes are as a Shadow that passeth away.

Qui aeternitate Dei perspecta breve & pœnè ad puncti instar humanæ vitæ spatium cogitaverit, ante oculos suos semper habebit interitum, &c. Hieron.

London, Printed by *R. D.* for *Joseph Cranford*, at the Sign of the *Castle* & *Lion* in St. *Pauls* Church-yard. 1659.

To his highly esteemed Friend, Mr. Nicholas Calquit.

I *Much* fear, *lest the* perusal *of this* Sermon *prove the* reviving *of your* sorrow, *and cause that* wound *which the* death *of your* Deare Consort *hath made, to* bleed afresh.

But I hope *withall, that as your* love *hath* prompted *you to* desire *a perpetuation of her* memory, *so your* prudence *teacheth you to moderate your* griefe *for her* dissolution.

That which especially concerneth *you, and whereof (I trust) you are not* forgetfull, *is,*

1. *Diligently to* enquire *into the* deserving cause *wherefore* God *hath deprived you of* so great *a comfort* so soon, *that the* showre *of your* tears *for* her, *may be* swallowed *up in the* river *of* godly sorrow *for* sin.

 2. *By*

2. *By this* ſad experience *to be ſo effectually* convinced *of the* uncertainty *of all* earthly *enjoyments*, *that it may be a* curb *to all* inordinate affection.

3. *Finally, when you* contemplate *her* duſt, *ſo to* remember *your* owne death, *that it may be a* ſpur *to a ſpeedy and conſtant* preparation.

So ſhall you have juſt reaſon *to ſay with* David, It is good for me that I have been afflicted. Pſal. 119. 71.

That theſe white flowers *may (through Gods grace) ſpring from the* black root *of your dolefull* Loſſe, *That that* wiſe Providence *which hath* made *this* ſore breach, *would be pleaſed to* make it up, *That what was (I hope in* love) denied *to* her, *may be (and that in* mercy) confer'd *on* you, *namely, a* long life *on* earth, *and that which is (I* truſt) *already* confer'd *on* her, *may (at length) be* given *to* you, *namely, an* æternal life *in* Heaven, *is the hearty* Prayer *of him whom you have by many favours* obliged *to be*

Your affectionate Friend,

NATH. HARDY.

A LOOKING-GLASSE OF Humane Frailty.

Pſalm the 39th. verſe the 5th.

Behold, thou haſt made my dayes as an hand bredth, and mine age is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his beſt ſtate is altogether vanity. Selah.

THere are *two evils* to which *the children of men* in this *world* are *ſubject*; namely, of *Sin*, and of *Affliction*: the *former* whereof calls for *Pœnitence*, the *later* for *Patience*: of both theſe *David* giveth us a *pattern*, of the *one* in

the *fore-going*, and the *other* in *this* Pſalm, that being (as St. *Ambroſe* hath well obſerved) *forma pœnitentiæ*, *a Pſalm of Repentance* for his Sins, and this *forma pœnitentiæ*, *a Pſalm of contentation* under his ſufferings.

Ambroſ. in Pſ.

The *two* great *duties* of *Gods ſervants* under *afflictions* are, a *ſilent ſubmiſſion*, and a *ſanctified uſe* of them: The *former* of theſe maketh *afflictions ſtill-born children*, in as much as it *ſhuts* the *mouth*, and repreſſeth all clamorous *cries*. This the *Pſalmiſt* learnt when he ſaid, *I was dumb, and opened not my mouth.* The *other* maketh *afflictions pregnant mothers*, in as much as they inable us to the *exerciſe* of many excellent *graces*.

Verſ. 9.

Among the ſeveral *influences* which *ſanctified* troubles have on us, it is not the *leaſt*, that it *openeth our eyes*. *Schola crucis ſchola lucis* is a known and experienced ſaying, the *ſchoole* of the *Croſſe* is very *lightſome*, and though *bitter* to the *taſte*, is a ſingular *ſalve* for the *eye*. *Apollonius* writeth of a *People* who *ſee nothing in the day*, but *all in the night*: In the *day of proſperity* we *forget*, in the *night* of *adverſity* we *remember* both *God* and our *ſelves*, as his *Soveraignty*, ſo our own *frailty*. *Alexander* who was *flattered* by the *people* as a *God*, having received a *wound* in his *body*, confeſſed himſelf to be *mortal*. This *holy man* whom you find *fancying* a *ſtability* in the *time* of his *proſperity*, *I ſaid my mountain is ſo ſtrong it cannot be moved*; being now un-

Pſal. 30. 7.

der

der a *croſſe*, acknowledgeth his brittle *fragility* in the *words* of the text: *Behold, thou haſt made my dayes as an hand bredth, &c.*

Though there is no *parcel* of *holy writ* which doth not deſerve our ſerious *view*, yet ſome *Scriptures* have as it were *aſteriſms* annexed to them, to intimate, that they ought to be more eſpecially *pondered* by us, and ſuch is *this* which I am now to handle. The *truth* is, there is no *leſſon* more *ſubſtantiall* than the *nothingneſſe* of our *ſubſtance* or age, no *meditation* more *ſerious* and *weighty* than that of mans *lightneſſe* and *vanity*; nor would any *Doctrine* be more cloſely *laid* to *heart* than this, that *our dayes are as an hand-bredth.* That this *tranſitorineſſe* of our *lives* might not be ſlightly *paſſed over* in our *mindes*; whereas *ſome* Scriptures have *one* aſteriſme either in the *beginning* or *end*, and *others two*, to wit, both in the *beginning* and the *end*, this *verſe* hath *three* notes of attention, in the *beginning*, in the *middle*, and in the *end*. The *firſt* word we meet with, is a *Behold*, which argueth it to be *rem ſeriam*, a ſerious leſſon: the *word* in the *middle* of the verſe is *verily*, which ſpeaketh it to be *rem certam*, a certain truth: and the laſt is *Selah*, which intimateth it to be *rem magnam*, a momentous Doctrine. *Behold* is a *note of attention*, *Verily* of *aſſeveration*, and *Selah* of *meditation*: *Behold* cals upon us to *take notice*, *Verily* requireth us to *believe*, and *Selah*

willeth us to *consider* it. I hope there will need *no more* to *quicken* your *hearts* and *ears* whilst I shall with all possible brevity discuss this *delineation* of the *shortnesse* of *life*: *Thou hast made my dayes, &c.*

The *Text* you see *consists* of *three* clauses; The *subject* of the *first* is *dayes*, and those *dayes measured*, and the *measure short*, *Thou hast made my dayes as an hands bredth*; The *subject* of the *second* is *age*, and that *age* being *weighed* in the ballance, found *light*, very light, a meer *nothing*; *mine age is nothing before thee*: The *subject* of the *third* is *man*, and that considered not in his *autumn*, but *spring*, who is found to be very *vain*, *every man in his best estate is altogether vanity*.

For our more *methodical* proceeding, observe in the text a *particular exemplification* of one and the same Doctrine.

The *Doctrine* is no other than *life's brevity*, which is,

Particularly exemplified in *David* himself, and that *two wayes*.

Absolutely in the *first* clause, *thou hast made my dayes as an hands bredth.*

Comparatively in the *second*, *mine age is as nothing before thee.*

Generally amplified, in reference to the *whole race* of mankinde, *every man in his best estate, &c.*

Before I enter upon these *severals*, it will not be incongruous to observe, that,

1. The

1. The *Pſalmiſt* thinketh it not enough to *mention*, but *inculcateth* this doctrine of the *brevity* of *humane* life; nor is it only *here*, but *elſewhere* to be *obſerved*; yea, not only in *him*, but *Job*: ſo that in *ſeverall* places, when thoſe *holy* men fall upon this *ſubject*, they ſet it forth with *multiplied* expreſſions both *proper* and *metaphoricall*.

That which we may well *conceive* to be hereby *intimated*, is,

1. On the one hand *our dulneſs* and *unwillingneſs* to lay this *truth* to *heart*. There is no *leſſon* we are more *untoward* to *learn*, and therefore the *Schoolmaſter repeats* it ſo often, among all the *neiles* of the *Sanctuary*, none *harder* to *enter* into us than this, and therefore the *Maſters of the Aſſemblies faſten* it ſo *ſtrongly*, indeed it is but *reaſon* that what we are ſo *prone* to caſt *behinde our backs*, ſhould be frequently ſet *before our eyes*.

2. On the *other* hand our *duty*, which is not *once*, but *again* and *again* to *conſider* it; *God hath ſpoken once* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *and* Pſal. 62. 11. *I have heard it twice*: It may admit this gloſs, what God ſpeaketh but once, we ſhould hear with twice that attention which we give to what is ſpoken by men; and ſurely if we ſhould *hear twice* what *God ſpeaketh once*, we ſhould *hear often* what he *ſpeaketh often*. That *leſſon* which is ſo much *iterated* cannot be *enough conn'd*, and what the *Holy Ghoſt* hath uttered in ſuch *multiplied*

plied words, is certainly moſt worthy our *multiplyed thoughts*.

For both theſe reaſons, no doubt it is, that the *Penmen* of *holy writ* do in their manifold *expreſſions* not only uſe *ſimilitudes* to repreſent the ſhortneſs of life, but *ſuch ſimilitudes* as are moſt *obvious* and *familiar* to us, that which way ſoever we *turn our eyes*, we may be *put in minde* of it. When we are at *Sea*,
Job 9. 25. 26. the ſpeedy *ſayling* of the *Ship*; when in *for-*
1 Pet. 1. 17. *reign* parts, the ſhort *time of our ſojourning*;
Iſay 38. 19. when on the *Road*, the *quick riding* of the *Poſt*; and when in *Tents*, the ſuddain *taking down* and removing of them, do all proclaim
Job 7. 9. to us the *paſſing away of our life*; the *vaniſhing* of the *clouds*, and *flight* of the *Eagle* a-
Iſay 40. 6. bove us; the *withering* of the *flowers*, and *cutting down* of the *graſs* beneath us; the
Pſal. 90. 4. *tales* we tell in the *day*, and *dreams* we have in the *night*; finally, the *breath* we dayly *ſend* out of our *mouths*, and here the *narrow bredth of our hands* are all made uſe of to *repreſent* this *truth* unto us, that whether we look *upward* or *downward*, both *waking* and *ſleeping*, both by *other creatures*, and by *our own ſelves*, we may be *admoniſhed* of our *mortality*.

2. This *good man* reflecting his *thoughts* upon *mans frailty*, *applieth* it to *himſelfe*, in that he ſaith, *my dayes*, and *mine age*, thereby ſetting us an excellent *pattern* of *bringing home generall truths to our own particulars*:

We

We are all very *backward* to grant that *in hypotheſi*, which we know to be true *in theſi*; that *all men are ſinners* we eaſily acknowledge; and yet who ſaith in good earneſt, *I am a ſinner*; that *every man is mortal* none will deny, and yet who conſiders, that *himſelfe is ſo*. It was St. *Hierom's* complaint *in communi ſtrage morientium nemo ſe cogitat moriturum*: even at ſuch times when *multitudes* are *taken away* by *death*, no man (almoſt) *thinketh* it will ſeize upon *him*: So that whereas it is a joyous *promiſe* to the *godly* man, *a thouſand ſhall fall at thy ſide, and ten thouſand at thy right hand, yet it* (to wit, the plague) *ſhall not come nigh thee*: It is the impious *practice* of the *wicked* man, *though a thouſand fall at his ſide, and ten thouſand at his right hand, not to think death ſhall* (nay to think it ſhall not) *come nigh him*. Hieron. Pſal. 91. 7.

But ſurely it is *our duty*, and will be *our wiſdome*, to bring home both *examples* and *doctrines* to our ſelves, that what we ſee *verified* in *others*, and what we *confeſs* is *appointed* for *all*, we alſo *look* upon as *impending* over our *own heads*. They are *both* intended by *God*, Oh let them be ſo made *uſe* of by us as *glaſſes* wherein to ſee our *own* faces. Do we then ſee *others* brought to their *graves*? what ſhould our *thoughts* be but to *allude* to thoſe words of St. *Paul* to *Saphyra*, *Behold, the feet of them who have buried this my brother* (or ſiſter) *are at the door to carry* Acts 5. 9.

Thee

me out. Do we *assent* to this truth, *death is the end of all men?* what should out *meditation* be, but this, *death will be my end?* The truth is, *universal propositions include each particular*, and therefore the *inference* is *just*; so that *David* in this verse saying, *every man*, might also well say, *My dayes*; and withall, *universal propositions* can have *little influence* upon the *will and affections*, unless every one look upon *himself* as included in them: To what *purpose* is it to *believe* the *Remission of sins*, and *The resurrection of the flesh*, if I do not also believe *The Remission of my sins*, and *The Resurrection of my flesh?* to as little *purpose* is it to acknowledge that *every man is vanity*, if I do not in particular consider, that *I am so. Behold, thou hast made my dayes, &c.*

3. *David* having *particularly asserted* his own frailty, goeth on to lay it down as a *generall maxime.*

Probably for his *own comfort*, in that it was not his *case alone*: It is a great *alleviation* of an *affliction* to consider that it is *common*; with this St. *Paul* cheared up the *Corinthians*, *There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man:* and in this particular of *death*, when *Joshua* and *David* perceived their *owne death* approaching, they *reflect* on its *generall* extent, *I go the way of all the earth*, thereby rendering it so much the lesse *terrible* to themselves.

1 Cor. 10. 13.

Josh. 23. 14.
1 Kings 2. 2.

Certainly,

Certainly, for *others warning* to make *account* of the *like*. Leſt any ſhould *think*, that though *Davids dayes* were but an *hands bredth*, yet theirs may be of a *longer* meaſure, he lets the whole *race* of mankind know, that they are *all concern'd*; ſo that as *Chriſt* ſaid to his *Diſciples*, *What I ſay unto you I ſay unto all*, *David* ſeemeth to ſay here, *What I ſay of my ſelfe I ſay of all*: It was not ſo in *other* things, though *David* could ſay of himſelfe in *one* place, *My Cup runneth over*; and in *another* place, *I am holy*, he could not ſay ſo of *every man*, nay, but a *few* men, they are not *many* who *enjoy* that meaſure of *proſperity*, and *fewer* who attain that *piety* which he had; but there are *none* who are not under the *law* of *mortality*, and therefore no wonder, if as he ſaith, *Thou haſt made my dayes*, ſo he concludes, *every man in his beſt eſtate, &c.* Marke 13.14. Pſal. 23. 4. 86. 2.

Theſe things being *premiſed*, I ſhall now *proceed* to the *diſtinct* handling of the ſeverall *clauſes*, and accordingly,

I ſhall begin with the *particular exemplifi-cation*, and that *Gen.* 1.

As it is ſet down *abſolutely* in thoſe words, *Thou haſt made my dayes as an hands bredth*, wherein the *Pſalmiſt* layeth downe a *double* aſſertion, the *one* concerning *himſelfe*, *My dayes are as an hands bredth*, the *other* concerning *God*, *Thou haſt made*. *Partic.* 1.

1. *David* affirmeth his *dayes* to be as an

hands bredth, by which *metaphor*, I conceive *two* things are intended.

1. An *hands bredth* is a *determinate measure*, *The time of life is set.* The *Vulgar* Latine reads it, *mensurabiles*; *dayes which may be measured*, that argueth *Tempus finitum*, that *this life is finite*: our *dayes* are both *numerabiles* and *mensurabiles*, such as may be *numbred* and *measured*, as being finite; But *dies palmares*, which is the true *reading* of the *originall*, goeth further, in that his *dayes* are said to be *as an hands bredth*, it noteth not only *Tempus finitum*, but *definitum*, such a *time* as shall *end*, but the *end* whereof is *fixed*, so true is that of *Job*, *Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth?*

Vulg. Lat.

Job 7. 1.

2. Chiefly *an hands bredth* is a *short measure*, and so is the *time of life*, St. *Hierome* understands it so, and therefore reads it expressly *breves*: Indeed both the words here used serve to *illustrate* this *truth*.

Hieron.

1. The *Psalmist* doth not say, *my years*, or *my months are as an hands bredth*, but *my dayes*, which next to *hours*, is the *shortest* dimension of time. Those sacred *Annals*, the *Books* of *Chronicles* are called in the *Hebrew*, *words of dayes*, for this reason probably, to intimate the *short lives* of the *Kings* of *Israel* and *Judah*, which are there recorded. The truth is, the singular number may serve to *represent* mans life, which is but

one

one day, the *proſperous* life a *Sun-ſhining*, the *afflicted* a *rainy day*, the *long* life a *ſummers*, and the *ſhort* a *winters* day; ſome have only a *morn* and *breakefaſt*, others ſtay till *noon* and *dine*, the *eldeſt* live but till *evening* and *ſup* in this *world*, all muſt *go to bed* in the *grave* when the *night* of *death* commeth.

2. But that which is *principally* intended, is the *meaſure* of thoſe *dayes*, which is not an *ell*, or a *yard*, or a *cubit*, the length of an *arm*, or an *elbow*; no, nor yet the *length*, but only the *bredth* of an *hand*: nor is this *affirmed* of one *particular day* by it ſelfe, but of *all* his *dayes together*, the *whole time* of his *life*. Thus as *Parrhaſius*, when he had drawn *Cyclops* aſleep on a *little table*, he placeth *Satyres* about him meaſuring his *thumb* with a *long ſtalk*, to expreſſe the *greatneſſe* of his *ſtature*; ſo here the *Pſalmiſt*, to ſet forth the *ſhortneſſe* of his *life*, brings in *God*, as it were *meaſuring* it with an *hands bredth*.

That you may yet more fully *diſcern* the *fitneſſe* of the *reſemblance*, it will not be amiſs to *obſerve* a *diſtinction* of a *double hand-bredth*.

The one *greater*, which is the *whole ſpace* between the *top* of the *thumb* and the *little finger* when the hand is *expanded*, it is in account near *twelve inches*, and is called a *ſpan*.

The other *leſſer*, which is only the *bredth*

of the *four fingers*, and thoſe not *diſtant* from, but *cloſed* one to the other.

The former of theſe is by the *Greek* called παλαιστὴ, and that is the word here uſed by *Symmachus*: the *later* is called παλαιστὴ, and that is the word uſed by the Seventy. Indeed in ſome copies it is παλαιὰς, *old dayes*, which may *admit* of a *good* conſtruction to this purpoſe, as *old garments* are *quickly* worn out, ſo are *our dayes*. But doubleſſe the beſt reading (as agreeing with the *Hebrew*) is, παλαιστὴς, which ſignifieth, the leſſer hands bredth; ſo that what *Anacharſis* ſaid of *Sea-men* is upon this account *true* of *all men*, there is but the ſpace of *four fingers* between *them* and *death*. Indeed this *metaphor* may very juſtly take in the whole *latitude* of *life* which men attain in this world, the *four fingers* bredth repreſenting the *four ages* of man, to wit, *Childhood*, *Youth*, *Manhood*, *Old age*: the *life* of a *childe* is ſcarce an *inch*, of an *old man* but a *ſpan*; of the *one* it may be ſaid, his *dayes* are but a *fingers bredth*, and of the *other* it can but be ſaid, *his dayes are as an hands bredth*.

2. Having taken this view of *dies palmares*, the *meaſure* of our *dayes*, which is an *hand-bredth*, it will be requiſite to *conſider* the *Tu poſuiſti*, *who* it is that hath made *our dayes ſuch*, and the *foregoing* verſe informeth us, that it is *Jehovah*, the *Lord*, to whom *David* directeth *there* his *prayer*, and *here* his *complaint*.

plaint. My times (ſaith this *holy* man elſe- Pſal. 31. 15.
where to *God*) *are in thy hands*; that is, *at his diſpoſe*; ſo much *Abraham* intended by the *phraſe*, when he ſaith to *Sarah* concerning *Hagar*, *behold, thy maid is in thy hands*, Gen. 16. 6.
do with her as pleaſeth thee: Thus were *Davids times* in *Gods hands*, to appoint the *continuance* of them, according to the *pleaſure* of his *own will*; yea, *Job* (ſpeaking of man *indefinitely*) ſaith, *his dayes are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou haſt appointed his bounds that he cannot paſſe.* He that hath ſet *bounds* to the *Sea, hitherto* it ſhall go and *no further*, hath appointed *limits* to *mans life*. *Thus long he ſhall live, and no longer.* Our *Saviour* ſaid to his *Diſciples*, *the hairs of your head are numbred*, and ſurely then the *dayes of our life are numbred*; and if the *ſparrow fall not to the ground*, much leſſe doth a *man*, without the *Father*, by whoſe *providence* all things are *ordered*, and conſequently, all *mans dayes* are *appointed*; ſo true is this of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Thou haſt made my dayes as an hands bredth.*

To cloſe up this with a double meditation.

1. Since *God* hath made *our dayes as an hands bredth*, let us be content *they ſhould be ſo*, not *murmuring* at the *brevity* either of our *own* or *others lives*, we are apt (with *Jonah*) to ſay, *we do well to be angry*, when (like his *gourd*) our *life*, or the *life* of any of our *friends*

friends quickly *withereth*; but this *holy mans* practice is *far better*, and ought to be our *pattern*, who ſaith in this *Pſalm*, *I was dumb and opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it.* The more to *enforce* this *leſſon* of *contentation* in this *reſpect* upon us, *conſider*,

1. It is *not* in thy *power* to make them *longer*, no not an *hairs bredth*, then *this hands* Luke 12. 25. *bredth, which of you* (ſaith our *Saviour*) *by taking thought, can add one cubit to his ſtature?* (I may add) *or one day to his life?*

Indeed a *prudent* care of *prolonging* our dayes is *commendable* as becauſe *God* requireth it ſo, becauſe the *time* how *long* we ſhall *live* is *unknown* to us: but an impatient *anxiety* in reſpect of life's *ſhortneſſe* is *fooliſh*, ſince it maketh our *life* ſo much the more *bitter*, and not at all *longer*.

2. Beſides, though *God* be the *efficient*, yet *we* are the *meritorious* cauſe of the *abbreviation* of *our dayes*; *God* at firſt made *our dayes* of ſuch a *bredth* as could not be *meaſured*, nor ſhould our *life* have *knowne death* if we had not *known ſin*: It is very *obſervable* what *Hezekiah* ſaith to this pur- Iſa. 38. 12. poſe, *I have cut off like a Weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining ſickneſſe*; acknowledging it to be his *own act* as well as Gods, yea (as the *order* imports) therefore *Gods*, becauſe *his*, Had not *we* our ſelves *cut ſhort* our lives, *God* would never have *cut* them

them *ſhort*, and therefore let us ſo *acknowledge* our *deſervings* as to clear *divine juſtice*, and ſubmit to his *diſpoſe*.

2. Since *God* hath made *our dayes as an hands bredth* let us ſo *account them*. No *arithmetick* in *numbring*, nor *Geometry* in *meaſuring* our *dayes* better than that which *God* himſelf teacheth. But alas it is an *uſuall* practice to make *our dayes* far *longer* in our *imaginations* than they are in *reality*. It was the *injuſtice* of that *Steward* to his *Lord*, who when the *debt* was *an hundred meaſures of wheat*, bid the debtor, *write fourſcore*; and when *an hundred meaſures of Oyle*, to write down *fifty*: but ſuch is our *injuſtice* to our ſelves, that when our *dayes* are not *fifty*, we write down *fourſcore*; and whereas they are but an *hands bredth*, we fancy them to be of a far *larger ſize*. Indeed, as the *deceitfull hour-glaſſe*, having the *ſand* up on *both ſides*, maketh a man thinke there is a *good deal* of the *hour* to *run out*, whereas by reaſon of an *hollowneſſe* in the *middle* it *ſinketh* preſently; ſo do *our dayes*, by reaſon of *ſtrength* and *health* promiſe us to be *many*, and on a ſuddain, by reaſon of ſome *ill humour* ſeizing on the *vitals* in the *middle* of the *body*, they prove to be *few*. It is a ſaying in the *Civil Law*, *Præſumitur quilibet vivere centum annos*, *Every one is preſumed to live an hundred years*; the *riſe* whereof is that fond *opinion* in the mindes of *moſt* men, where-

whereby they flatter themselves with *apprehensions* of *long life*. Oh let us remember it is the *property* of a *good* man (according to the *Greeke* Fathers phrase) παροδίαν τὸν βίον, to esteem his life as a *Pilgrimage* of a *short continuance*. And this especially for four ends.

Greg. Naz.

1. *To hasten our repentance* for our *sins*. The *measure* of our dayes, is the *space* of our repentance, since it is *narrow*, let this be *speedy*; that cannot be *long extended*, let not this be *long deferred*; *One* of the *dayes* of thy *life* must be the *day* of *repentance*, and if *one*, why not *this* day? especially considering the *measure* (for ought thou *knowest*) may be at the *utmost extent*, and *this day* may prove thy *last*. It is true, *At what time soever a sinner repents from the bottome of his heart, God will do away his offence*; but then he must *repent whilest he hath time*: At *what time* the *winde* serveth the *Mariner*, he may *saile* to the *Haven*; but then he must *saile* while the *winde serveth*, which will not be *always*, nor *long*, and therefore let us be so *wise*, as to *take time* whilest it is *afforded*.

2 To *lessen our affections* towards this *world*. Whenas the *measure* of our *dayes* is *contracted* to an *hands bredth*, why should the *earthy desires* of our *hearts* be so much *enlarged*? Could we at our *pleasure* add *day* to *day* and *year* to *year*, it were good

policy

policy to joyne *house* to *house*, and *field* to *field*; but to what *purpose* are *many goods*, when (with the *rich fool* in the *Gospel*) we have perhaps but a *few hours*, whilest thou *livest*, thy *dayes* are but as the *bredth* of thy *hand*, when thou diest, thou shalt have no more *ground* than the length of thy *body*, why so *greedy* in *grasping* large *revenews* and vast *possessions*?

3. *To lengthen our patience* under the *afflictions* of this *present life*, *our dayes* are of a *narrow bredth*, a *short length*, and *afflictions* can last no *longer*, nor be extended *broader* than our *dayes*; Why should not our *patience* be as *large* and *long* as our *afflictions*? One *Greek* reading of this clause is παλαιῳ, dayes of *strife* and *misery*; such were *Davids* at this time, and many times are *ours*, but the comfort is, they are παλαιῳ, only an *hands bredth*: *Man that is born of a woman* (saith *Job*) *is of few dayes, and full* Job 14. 1. *of trouble*. True our *dayes* are full of *trouble*, I but withall they are *few*; the *fewnesse* of our *days* would be a *trouble*, were it not that they are *full of trouble*, and the *fulnesse* of their *trouble* might be a *griefe*, were it not for their *fewnesse*: Neither on the one hand should the *pleasure* of our *dayes* much *elevate* us, nor on the other, the *sorrows* of them *perplex* us, when we *consider*, that those though *sweet*, are but *short*, and these though *sharp*, are but *few*, very *few*, no more than will

make up as it were an *hands bredth*.

4. To *quicken us* in the *practice* of *good works*, They ſay of the *Birds* of *Norway*, that they *fly faſter* than *others*, not becauſe *Nature* hath given them *more*, or *ſwifter wings*, but becauſe the *dayes* are *ſhorter there* than *elſewhere* they make the *greater haſte*, Oh that the *conſideration* of the *ſhort meaſure* of our *days* might *accelerate* us in our *race* to *heaven*, ſo as with great *ſpeed* and *diligence* we may learn to *worke out our ſalvation*. It is ſaid of the *Devil*, he is *come down* to the
Rev. 12.12. *Inhabitants* of the *earth*, *having great wrath*, becauſe he *knoweth his time is but ſhort*; how ſhould we beſtir our *ſelves* with great *zeale* in *Gods ſervice*, ſince we know our *time* is *ſhort*. Take in the *whole life* of man, it is but as the *bredth of four fingers*, ſure we had not need to *loſe any* of them: He that having but *four acres* to *ſow* with *corn* (all which is little enough to *ſupply* his *family*) and ſhould only *ſow one*, and let the reſt *overrun* with weeds, will he not deſervedly be *branded* for a *fool*? Oh why then are we ſo *fooliſh* to miſ-ſpend the *greateſt* part of our *dayes* in *doing nothing*, or *worſe than nothing*, when as all our *dayes* are but four fingers bredth; *Nature*, or rather the *God of nature*, hath not given us (to uſe *Seneca's* expreſſion) ſo *large* a *time of life*, as to *trifle* away *any part* of it; yea, he that *ſpends it beſt* will ſtill have cauſe to ſay with *David* in the *cloſe* of this

Pſalm.

Pſalm, *O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength before I go hence, and be no more ſeen.*

2. You have heard the *brevity* of *mans life* exemplified in *David*, by an *abſolute* aſſertion under the *metaphor* of an *hand bredth*, go we on to the *comparative* propoſition, *mine age is nothing before thee.*

The *ſubject* of this *propoſition* is *varioufly* rendred. By the *Caldee* it is read *body*, and indeed it is mans duration in reſpect of his *body*, which is ſaid to be *as nothing*, ſince the *ſoul* is *immortal*. *Aquila* reads it [illegible], the *time* of the *ſouls impriſonment* in the *body*; the *Seventy* tranſlate it [illegible], which is rendred by the *Vulgar Latine ſubſtantia*, but properly ſignifieth *ſubſiſtentia*, and is ſo to be *underſtood* here, *my ſubſiſtence*. The *Hebrew* word is moſt genuinely *tranſlated* by *ævum*, *mine age*, to wit, in this *world*; for *that* is ſometimes the *ſignification* of the *word*.

Concerning his *age*, *David* ſaith, *it is as nothing*: If you compare this with the *former* clauſe, you ſhall obſerve a *gradation*, *aſcending* in the *ſubject*, whereas there *dayes*, here *an age*, which is made up not only of *dayes*, or *months*, but *years*, *deſcending* in the *prædicate*, there an *hands bredth*, (which is but *ſmall*) here *nothing*. *Solomon* ſpeaking of the *comforts* of *life*, ſeemeth to *call* them Prov. 23. 5. *non entities*, *Wilt thou ſet thine eyes upon that*

which is not? for this reason (no doubt,) because their *being* is a continuall *tendency* to *not being*. Upon the same accompt, the *age* of *Davids* life is here said to be *nothing*, because of *no continuance*; the word חלד is near a kin to חדל, which commeth from חדל *cessavit*, and so *soon* doth *mans age cease*, that it is as if it were *not at all*.

But yet this must be taken with its *restrictions*. *David* doth not say, *mine age is nothing*, but it is *as nothing*; nor doth he say this *positively*, but *respectively*, in reference to *God*, *it is as nothing before thee*.

The Prophet *Isaiah* (speaking of the whole *world* of *mankind*) saith, *The Nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are accompted as the small dust of the ballance: behold, he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing*; but as if this were not *full enough*, a little after he saith, *All Nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him lesse than nothing and vanity*: a *small dust*, a *single drop* are *little* things, I but they are *something*; the *Prophet* cannot enough set forth the *distance* between *God* and the *Nations* unlesse he *go lower*, and therefore he saith, *they are as nothing*. Nay, as if this were not enough, he will *strain* the *sence*, and speak a *contradiction*, rather than not expresse his *meaning*, where he saith, *they are lesse than nothing*, then *which* (to speak *properly*) *nothing can be lesse*. And surely if this be *true* of *all Nations*, well

Isa. 40. 15.

Vers. 17

well might *David* affirm it of *his age*, and if you would *know* the meaning of *thoſe* words *before thee*, it is explained in that of the *Prophet*, when having ſaid *before him*, he addeth, they are *counted to him*, that is, *in compariſon of him*. Suitable to this it is that the *Pſalmiſt* having ſet forth *Gods eternal duration*, and preſently after *ſpeaking* of *mans years*, he calleth them in the *language* of the Seventy ἐξουθενήματα, which *Tertullian* reads *nullificamina*; and it is the ſame in effect with that which goeth *before*, *a thouſand years are in thy ſight but as yeſterday*, which being *paſt*, is *nothing*. *Dei eſſe eſt ſuum eſſe*, ſay the *Schools*, from that of *God* to *Moſes*, *I am that I am*, *Gods being is of and from himſelf*; yea, it is *himſelf*, he is *One undivided*, *unconfined*, *ſimple*, *eternall*, and *originall* being, and as there is *no being*, but *from him*, ſo all *other beings* are *as nothing* in reſpect of *him*. Pſal. 90. 4, 5.

It will not be *amiſs* (for the further *illuſtration* of this *truth*) to conſider the *age* of *Davids* life in ſeverall *references*.

1. *David* might truly have ſaid, *Mine age is ſhort in reſpect of Methuſelah's*: the *Dayes* of *Methuſelah* are ſaid to be *nine hundred ſixty and nine years*: the *dayes* of *David*, by *computation* of the time when he began, and how long he reigned, were not much above *threeſcore and ten*, ſo that he *lived* not ſo many *tens* as *Methuſelah* did *hundreds*. The Gen. 7. 5. a Sam. 5. 4.

life

life of man *before* the *flood*, was as a *large Volume* bound up *in folio*, but ſince it is *contracted* to a far *leſſer* volume, and is (as it were) *bound* up *in decimo ſexto*, ſo that whereas *David* ſaith in the *former* clauſe, *my dayes are as a hands bredth*, he might have ſaid, they are as a *fingers bredth* in compariſon of the ancient *Patriarchs*.

2. *David* might have ſaid, *Mine age is very ſhort in compariſon of the age of the world*. St. *Paul* ſaith of the *faſhion* of this *Macrocoſm* 1 Cor. 7.31. *it paſſeth away*, but the *age* of the *Microcoſm*, *man* paſſeth away far *ſwifter*. The *World* was almoſt as many *thouſand* years old as *David* was *ſcores* in his times, that number is now well nigh *doubled*, but *mans age* is rather *ſhortned*. How many *hundreds* of *yeares* the *world* may yet *continue* is not *known* to us, but the *ordinary number* of the *yeans* of *mans age* now, compared with the *number* of *ſix thouſand* years, is but ſo much as a *week* is to a *year*, or a *minute* to an *hour*, ſo that whereas he ſaith *my dayes are as a ſpan long*, he might have ſaid *they are not an inch long*, in reſpect of the *worlds duration*.

3. *David* might have ſaid, *Mine age in this World is exceeding little, in compariſon of the duration of the other world*. The *age to come* is no leſſe than an *æternity*, and though it have a *beginning*, it ſhall have *no end*; ſo that whereas the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith *My dayes are as an hands bredth*, he might have ſaid, *they*

are

are as an hairs bredth in reſpect of the *continuance* of the *world to come.*

4. Finally, *David* might have ſaid, *Mine age is ſcarcely any thing before the Angels*, whoſe *duration* began with *this world*, and ſhall *continue* in the *world to come*, and ſo is *coætaneous* with *both* the *worlds.*

But all *theſe* are *far ſhort* of this *compariſon* which he here maketh of his *age* with *God*, who is *eternal*, both *a parte ante*, and *a parte poſt*, *from everlaſting to everlaſting.* The utmoſt *imaginable* extent of *Time* in compariſon of *æternity* is far *leſſe* than an *inſtant*, is in reſpect of the *longeſt Time.* Were it poſſible to *divide æternity* into *parts*, a *million of years* would not be ſo much as a *ten hundred thouſandth part*; and what then is *ſeventy* or *fourſcore* years? no wonder if *David* ſay, *mine age is nothing* (a meer nothing) *before thee.*

It is an *excellent* leſſon which may here be taken forth by us, namely, to *looke* upon our *ſelves* in reference to *God*, that ſo we may be *vile* and *little* in our *own eyes.* There are many *exeellencies* wherein we are apt to *glory*, and whereof to *boaſt*, which if they would but *compare* with *divine attributes*, would appear *mean* and *contemptible.* Wert thou *ſtrong* as *Sampſon*, yet thou mayſt ſay, *My ſtrength is nothing before thee*, not ſo much as a *weak ſtripling* is before a *mighty Giant*; wert thou as *wiſe* as *Solomon*, yet

ſay,

ſay, *my wiſdome is nothing before thee*, not ſo much as the *ſilly brute* is before the *intelligent Angels*; the very *fooliſhneſſe* of *God* (to uſe St. *Pauls* language) *being wiſer than the wiſdome of men*; Wert thou *Honorable* as *Alexander*, yet ſay, *mine honour is nothing before thee*, not ſo much as the *glimmering candle* is before the *glorious Sun*; wert thou *rich* as *Creſſus*, thou muſt ſay, *my riches are nothing before thee*, not ſo much as the *drop of water* is to the *Ocean*: Finally, wert thou as *old* as *Methuſelah*, thou muſt ſay, *mine age is nothing before thee*, not ſo much as a *new born babe* to *aged Methuſelah*.

To *end* this, ſince *Mans age* is nothing *before God*, let it be *nothing* before *man himſelf*, indeed as for that *part* of our *age* which is *paſt*, it is ſo *with us*, *many years* ſince, being but as a *few dayes*, and the *time* which is *gone*, is *as nothing*, Oh that we would *looke* with the *ſame eye* upon that which is *to come*. Indeed in *one* ſence we muſt *reckon* our *age* as *ſomething*, and that *pretious*, well were it if we would ſet an *higher* value upon *our time* than to *waſte* it away in folly, but ſtill as to the *duration* we muſt account it *as nothing*, and then we would have *none* to ſpare, but wholly imploy it for the *gaining* of that which is as *ſomething before God*, a *joyfull* and *happy eternity*. And ſo much ſhall ſerve to be *ſpoken* of the *firſt part* of the *text*, the *particular exemplification*, paſs we on to the

Generall

Generall Amplification, in theſe words, *Every man in his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*. A *clauſe* wherein *each* word is *Emphaticall*, which will the better *appear*, if you take a *view* of Gen. 2.

1. The *extenſiveneſs* of the *ſubject* concerning whom this *doctrine* is *aſſerted*, which is,

1. Not the creeping *piſmire*, the crawling *worm*, the ſtupid *aſſe*, or any of the *ſenſitive* creatures but *Man*, who is *endued* with *reaſon*.

2. Not one or a *few* particular *men*, in ſome *one part* of the *world*, but of *every man*, who either *hath been*, *is*, or *ſhall* live in *any part* of the *world*.

3. Not onely of *mean*, *poor*, and *ignoble* perſons, but of *man at his beſt eſtate*, *Quamvis floreat dignitate, opibus, potentia*, as *Mollerus* gloſſeth upon the *text*, though he *flouriſh* in *wealth*, *honour*, and *power*; for though the *Seventy* reading be ζῶν, every man *living*, yet the *Hebrew* נצב which ſignifieth *conſtitutus*, *fixed*, or *ſetled*, is moſt properly *refer'd* to him who ſeemeth to be in a *ſtabliſhed proſperous eſtate*.

2. The *Intenſiveneſſe* of the *prædicate* in that *every man* at his *beſt eſtate* is,

1. Not only *like* to *vanity*, that is the *language* of the *Pſalmiſt* elſewhere, *Adam* is as *Abel*, *homo ſimilis factus eſt*, man is become *like to vanity*; but he is *vanity*, as if it were not only his *reſemblance*, but his *ſubſtance*. Pſal. 144. 4.

2. Nor is he only ſaid to be *vain* in the *concrete*, as *Zophars* language is, *vain man would be wiſe*; but *vanity* in the *abſtract*, as if it were not only an *accident*, but *his eſſence*.

Job 11. 12.

3. Nor is it only ſaid, *he is vanity*, as it is elſwhere in this *Pſalme*, but is *altogether vanity*, as if *from the crowne of his head to the ſoles of his feet* he were *nothing but vanity*.

4. Nay, in the *Hebrew* the *Emphaſis* is yet *further*, in that *vanity* is the *ſubject*, and *man* the *prædicate*, for ſo the *words* are to be rendred, according to the originall, *Altogether vanity is every man*, as if *man* were not to be *defined* by *vanity*, but *vanity* by *man*; ſo that if you *aſk*, *What is vanity?* the *anſwer* is, *it is man:* No marvel if the *Pſalmiſt* elſewhere affirme, that *man is lighter than vanity*; ſo that were *man* put in *one ſcale*, and *vanity* in the *other*, *man* would *mount up* as being *lighter*, and *vanity* it ſelfe would *weigh* him *down*.

Pſal. 62. 9.

To *illuſtrate* the *truth* of this aſſertion, know.

1. That there is a *double vanity*, to which *every man at his beſt eſtate* is *ſubject*, namely, of *diſpoſition* and *condition*.

1. *Man* is *vanity* in his *diſpoſition*. The *Grammarian* in *Aulus Gellius* maketh *vanus* and *ſtultus* ſynonimous: *vanus quaſi mente vacuus*, and ſo *every man is vanity*, becauſe *a fool*, Indeed *vain man would be wiſe*, but he

he *is fooliſh* in his *thoughts*, *projects*, *deſires*, and *actions*. In the very *next* verſe it is ſaid, *they are diſquieted in vain*, to wit, with fooliſh *projects*, and fruitleſſe *cares*. *The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity*; it is no leſſe *true* of his *words* and *works*: no wonder if *man* be compared to a *ſhadow*, having no *light* of knowledge in his *minde*, *heat* of grace in his *heart*, nor *ſubſtance* or *ſolidity* in his *actions*. Verſ. 6.

2. But that which is here chiefly *intended* is, the *vanity* of *man* in reſpect of his *condition*; in reference to this it is that it is ſaid in the *beginning* of the next verſe, *man walketh in a vain ſhew*, as if his *reſidence* in this *world* were but like that of a *Player* upon the *ſtage*, and this is here *affirmed* of his *beſt eſtate* and condition. Verſ. 6.

2. *Mans condition* at the *beſt* is but *vanity* in *three* reſpects, becauſe *inconſtant* and periſhing, *empty*, and unſatisfying, *falſe* and deceiving.

1. *Vanum quod evaneſcit*, that which is *vain* hath no *ſolidity*, and therefore no *permanency*; *lightneſſe* is the proper *adjunct* of *vanity* and *inconſtancy* the *effect* of *lightneſſe*. Such is *mans beſt eſtate*, he ſeemeth to be *ſetled* as the *earth*, but he *vaniſheth* with the *winde*, *changeth* with the *moon*, and *ebbeth* with the *water*, *Homo Bulla* is true of *man*, at his *beſt eſtate* he is like the *bubble* which ſwels up by the *rain falling* upon the

water, and fals preſently, or which the *child* cauſeth with the *breath* of his *mouth* at the *end* of the *reed*, and *vaniſheth* with the leaſt *ſhaking* of his *hand*. It was not without *reaſon* that *man* is called by the *Phyloſopher*, *Ludus fortunæ*, *Fortunes may-game*, with whom ſhe *ſports* her ſelfe, by putting him as it were into various *ſhapes*, in altering his *condition*, *Man at his beſt eſtate*, like the *Venice glaſſe*, is *bright*, but *brittle*; or like *Sodoms Apples*, *golden colour'd*, but *mouldring*; his ſtrength a *ruſh*, ſoon *ſhaken*; his *riches*, *duſt*, quickly *driven* away; his *honour* a *fancy*, preſently *gone*. To *day Nebuchadnezzar* jets it on the *houſe top*, as if he expected a *ſalutation* from the *cœleſtial Majeſty*, and ſuddenly he is *turned* to *graze* with the *beaſts* of the *field*, with which agreeeth that of the Poet,

Sen. Trag. *Quem dies vidit veniens ſuperbum,*
Hunc dies vidit fugens jacentem.

Shew me that *Roſe* that will not *fade*, that *fruit* which will not *putrifie*, that *cloud* which will not *vaniſh*, that *garment* which will not *fret*, and then (not till then) *expect* to finde that *man* who in his *beſt* and moſt proſperous eſtate is not *ſubject* to *mutation* and *diſſolution*.

2. *Vanity* and *inanity* go together. One of the *Hebrew* words ריק which is rendred *vain*, ſignifieth *empty*; that which is *vain* is *empty*, and being ſo, cannot *ſatisfie*, ſuch is *mans beſt*

beſt eſtate, as not able to give any true *content*. *Man* at his *beſt eſtate*, as he is *mutable*, ſo he is *unſatiable*, his *deſires* are ſtill *larger* than his *fortune*; nor is it any time ſo *well with him*, but that ſtill he would be *better*. *Ahab* in the midſt of his *opulency* is ſick for *Naboth's* Vineyard; *Hamon* in the *height* of *dignity* is troubled at the want of *Mordecay's* knee. *Health*, *beauty*, *wealth*, *honours*, Say of *Content* as the *depth* ſaith of *wiſdome*, *it is not in us*. Man in his moſt *proſperous* concondition feedeth *upon winde* which cannot *fill* the *ſtomach*, and therefore like the *horſeleech* he ſtill crieth, *Give*, *give*.

3. That which *deceiveth* our expectation ſeeming to *be what it is not*, and promiſing (as it were) to *do that it cannot*, is *vain* in the *worſt* ſence, being at once both *vanity* and *vexation*. This is *true* of man at his *beſt eſtate* who *promiſeth* to *himſelfe* and *others* that which he cannot perform, and ſo is *deceived* and *deceiveth*.

The *rich fool*, being in a proſperous eſtate, *promiſed himſelf much pleaſure*, but was miſerably *diſappointed*. *Job* ſaith of his brethren, *they dealt deceitfully with him as the brooks do by the Traveller which are dry in the ſcorching heat*, when he is *moſt thirſty*. Job. 6. 15.

It is a remarkable paſſage in the *Pſalms*, *Men of low degree are vanity*, *men of high degree are a lie*: a *man* of *low degree* is at his *worſt*, a *man of high degree* at his *beſt eſtate*, and Pſal. 62. 9.

yet

yet whereas *men* of *low degree* are ſaid to be *vanity*, men of *high degree* are ſaid to be *a lie*, which is as it were the *dregs* of *vanity*, becauſe it tends to *deceive*, which yet is moſt juſtly *affirmed* of *men of high degree*, who by reaſon of their *place* and *ſtate* in this world, ſeeme to *promiſe* much, and yet are *in truth* a *lie*, not *performing* what they *promiſe*, and ſo *diſappointing* both their *owne* and *others* hopes.

The *uſe* we are to make of this *doctrine*, is, in *reference* both to *others*, and our *ſelves*.

1. In reſpect of *others*, whether *enemies* or *friends*.

Are the *Churches* or *our enemies* (to *outward appearance*) in an *eſtabliſhed* condition of *proſperity*? let us not *give way* to *exceſſe* of *grief* and *fear*, or *anger*, but rather *remember* in their *beſt eſtate* they are *vanity*, and being ſo, are ſet in *ſlippery places*. They ſeem to be *fixed ſtars*, but in truth they are only *blazing comets*, which appear for a *little time* and then *vaniſh* away.

2. Are our *friends* for the preſent in a *flouriſhing* eſtate? take we heed how we let out either our *hopes* or *love* too much towards them, conſidering that they are but *vanity*, and therefore our *hope* which is placed on them will end in *ſhame*, and our *love* in *vexation*: Why ſo *big* with *expectation* of *advantage* or *advancement* from thy *rich*

Ally,

Ally, Honorable Lord, potent friend? alas, thou doſt but ſet thy *foot* upon the *water* which cannot *bear* thee: Why ſo *inflamed* with *affection* to thy *beautifull Wife, childe,* or near *relation?* Alas, thou doſt but *embrace* a *ſhaddow* in thine *arms,* which cannot, muſt not *ſtay long* with thee.

2. In reſpect of our *ſelves.*

1. *Reflect* we with *ſorrow* and *hatred* upon *ſin,* the true *cauſe* of *mans vanity. Man* in his *firſt eſtate* was *altogether excellency; God ſaw every thing that he made, and behold it was very good:* ſurely this was much more true of *man* the *maſter-piece* of the *creation,* the *image* and *glory* of his *Maker,* not *vanity,* but *divinity* was his *nature;* he was not envelop'd with *rags* of *frailty,* but enobled with *robes* of *innocency;* nor did he *walke* in a *vain ſhew,* but a *ſacred repreſentation* of *God himſelf.* And now if you would know how this *flower* was *blaſted,* it was by the *breath* of the *Baſilisk;* how this *image* was *defaced,* it was by the *poyſon* of the *Serpent;* how man became *vanity,* it was by reaſon of *iniquity:* ſo true is that of the *Wiſe-man, He that ſoweth iniquity ſhall reap vanity.* The Hebrew words, חבל *vanity,* and אבל *mourning* are ſomewhat near in *ſound;* Oh, let us *mourn* for that *vanity* to which *ſin* hath *ſubjected* us, and let us *abhor ſin* which hath *ſubjected* us to it. Gen. 1. 32. Prov. 22. 8.

2. *Provide*

2. *Provide* we for our ſelves another, a *better eſtate* than the *beſt* which this *world* affords, an eſtate of *glory* in the *Heavens*, *Mans beſt eſtate* on *earth* is *mutable*, but *that is durable*; *empty*, but that is *ſatisfying*; *uncertain*, but that is *ſure*; only for *term of years*, but that is for *æternity*. *Phyloſophers* generally *affirm*, that the *Heavens* are in *continuall motion*, and the *earth* ſtands *immoveable*, though there are *thoſe* who aſſert, that the *heavens ſtand ſtill*, and the *earth moveth*: This indeed is a *riddle* in *Phyloſophy*, but it is a certain *truth* in *Divinity*, that the *things* of *earth* are in a continuall *flux*, and the things of *Heaven* in a ſtable *permanency*.

And therefore in whatſoever *ſtate* we are *here*, let us *learn* to be *content*, be it never ſo *mean*, ſo as not to *repine*; and let us not be *content*, be it never ſo *high*, ſo as to reſt *ſatisfied*; and whether our *eſtate* in this vvorld be *high* or *low*, let the *firſt* and *beſt* of our deſires and endeavours be after that *eſtate* vvhich is not a *ſhaddow*, but a *ſubſtance*; not a *leaſe*, but an *inheritance*; not *vanity*, but *fælicity*, and ſhall be far *more* in the *fruition* than it is in the *expectation*. To the *poſſeſſion* vvhereof he bring us vvho hath *purchaſed* it for us. Amen.

I Have done with my *Text*, but I muſt not yet *have done*. This ſad *providence* wills us to *ſit ſtill* a while longer, and by taking a *ſerious view*, to make a *Religious* uſe of it.

It is not very many *months* ſince I was *imployed* to perform a far more *welcome* office for this *our Siſter*, namely, the *conſummating* her *Nuptials*. She being in the *prime* of her *years*, happily *matched* to a dearly *loving* and *loved Husband*, enjoying a *confluence* of all outward *contentments*, ſeemed as it were (to uſe the *Pſalmiſts* phraſe) to be in a *ſettled eſtate*, and (according to our *uſuall* phraſe) to be *provided for as to this world*.

But *alas!* in how *ſhort* a *revolution* of time, how *dolefull* an *alteration?* This *yong, ſtrong, haile, beautifull Gentlewoman* in her *beſt eſtate* becommeth a *ſad inſtance* of the *generall doctrine* in my Text; This *flouriſhing flower* is *blaſted* by the *winde* of a *violent diſeaſe*, and *plucked* as it were out of her *Husbands boſome*, by the *rough hand* of *Death*, and I am now called to *officiate* her *Funerals*.

Thus have you ſometimes *ſeen* the *bright Sun-ſhine* on a ſudden *vailed* with a *darke cloud*, and a *ſerene Skie* hung with *black*.

But yet let not, Oh let not her *near* and *dear* friends ſhed too many *tears* over her

Grave, remembring the *Tu poſuiſti* in the *Text*, *who* it is that hath *made her dayes as an hands bredth*, even *He* in *whoſe hands* all our *times are* to *prolong* and *cut ſhort* as he *pleaſeth*: Beſides, why ſhould they *weep above meaſure*, ſince they do not *grieve as without hope* of (that which is moſt truly *called*) *her beſt eſtate*, her *æternall welfare*.

Her *Education* was *Religious*, and her *Converſation vertuous*; ſhe was well *inſtructed* in, and *affected* to the *beſt things*. The *ſilver Picture* of her *comely body* had in it the *golden Apple* of a *well diſpoſed ſoule*; the *golden ring* of her *Soul* had ſet into it the *pretious Diamond* of *Vertue*. A *ſpotleſſe innocency*, *humble modeſty*, and *calme meekneſs* were her choice *Ornaments*; She was an *obedient Daughter*, a *loving Siſter*, an *affectionate Spouſe*, a *true friend*, and (I truſt) a *good Chriſtian*.

In the *time* of her *ſickneſſe* ſhe gave *evidence* of many *graces*, a confident *reliance* upon her gracious *God* for *deliverance* from all her *pains*, a penitent *bewailing* her *careleſs expence* of *time*, with ſerious *reſolves* (if *God* ſhould prolong her *dayes*) of more *exactneſs* in her *Chriſtian courſe*, together with her patient *ſubmiſſion* to the *good will* of her *heavenly Father*.

When ſhe *beheld* upon her *hands* the *marks* of her *diſeaſe*, ſhe ſaid, *Theſe are Gods Tokens, and I willingly embrace them.* That

ſay-

ſaying of *Solomon*, *Favour is deceitfull, and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the* Prov. 31. 30. *Lord ſhe ſhall be praiſed*, which was the *ſubject* of my *diſcourſe* occaſioned by her *Nuptials*, was often in her *thoughts*; ſo that ſhe was not at all *troubled* with any anxious *fears* leſt the *diſeaſe* ſhould *ſpoile* her *beauty*; and though the *rod* were *ſmart* upon her *back*, nay, I may ſay her *face*, her whole *body*, ſhe *reſolved* to *kiſſe it*.

Some *few* dayes before her *death* a *drowſineſs* ſeized upon her, which *continued* (for the *moſt* part) to her *laſt houre*, when one *Brother* tooke (as it were) the *other* by the *heele*, *death* following her *ſleep*, yea, her *death* being but a *ſleep*, and the *grave* to which ſhe is now going a *bed* wherein ſhe ſhall *repoſe* her ſelfe till the *morne* of the *Reſurrection*, when ſhe will (I *hope*) be *married* to the *Lamb*; nor ſhall any *Funerals* ſucceed thoſe joyfull *Nuptials*.

Weep not then for her who is *not dead* but *ſleepeth*, *dry* your *eyes*, and (with this *holy* man) *open* not your *mouths*, or if you do, let it be in *Ely's* language, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth good in* 1 Sam. 3. 18. *his ſight*.

And now ſince the *Text* and *occaſion* preach to us how *vaine we are*, how ſhort our *lives* are, and to what *changes* we are *ſubject*; what remaineth, but that *e-*

very one of us be *exhorted* to *prepare* for *changes*, especially our *last*, and so to *order* our *steps*, that when these *dayes* on *earth*, which are as an *hands bredth*, are ended, we may passe to an *eternity* of *dayes* without either *number* or *measure* in the *highest Heavens*. Amen.

FINIS.

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